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OUR COMMON SCHOOL SYSTEM. No. VII.

One of the most important features of the Prussian School System is, that all the schools of the kingdom are provided for alike. Ample provision is made for a supply of good teachers, and probably not one in fifty of our New England teachers would pass the examination required there. School-rooms of equal value and fitness are furnished by government, and the children are obliged to attend punctually, if they are able. All this goes upon the ground, that, if it is the duty of a State to educate its members, it is equally the duty of the members to be educated; and if it is the duty of the State to educate the members at all, it is its duty to educate all alike, and educate them well. We are no eulogists of Prussia, and have always wondered how that arbitrary monarchy could risk its very existence by encouraging such a system of general education; for, although the duties of passive obedience and non-resistance to government are undoubtedly enforced with great zeal by the teachers, who depend in a great measure upon the government, and are very strictly watched, still, when a people are educated, and can read, write, and converse intelligently together, no unjust or arbitrary government can long withstand them. The Pilgrim Fathers understood this, and the Independence of these Colonies was actually declared when the Plymouth Company transferred the government from England to the wilderness, and passed the act establishing free schools.

The Massachusetts School System, as originally established, was not so defective as it is now, or at least was free from some of the defects, the worst defects, that now exist. The privilege of obtaining an education was more highly prized by them than by us, for education with us, like air and light, is undervalued merely because it is common, and there can be no surer proof of this, and of the unattractive character of the instruction given in our schools, than the recent attempt to compel truants to attend school by force of law. That the Prussian government should do this is a paradox, for it is suicidal, but for our free government to be obliged to resort to it, betrays an ignorance and an indifference nothing short of monstrous. The truth is, probably, that education is looked upon, by a large portion of our people, as the Romish religion is in Spain, as a thing of habit, a matter of form, which it is not safe or reputable to disregard. Our fathers knew nothing at first of the districting system, and, when a town had more than one school, the jurisdiction was not divided. The selectmen had the oversight of all the schools, and, poor as they were, they were equally good in the same town. What the towns are to each other now in point of educational privileges, the districts are to the towns, and if we compare the most favored district of the most liberal town with the most neglected district of a niggardly town, we shall hardly be persuaded that both schools have been created under the same school system.

The Board of Education have not been ignorant of this state of things; their Secretary at least has alluded to it, but neither he nor they have so followed up the discovery as to persuade the people, or the Legislature, of the necessity and justice of immediate reform. The best schools and school-houses are in the undistricted towns and cities, and the reason is very apparent, for, if one portion of the town procures a good school-house, from the common fund, the other portions also demand a good one as a matter of right. If one portion has a good teacher, every other portion must have one, for the teachers are paid from the common fund. In districted towns the school-house is furnished by the district, and, if the district is poor, or thinks itself so, the old house is retained long after it has ceased to be commodious, and up with the times; nay, long after it has ceased to be large enough to seat all the children that have a right to attend. The former Secretary of the Board, in an official document, has formally declared that, "If the prudential (or district) committee, and the superintending (or town) committee, are not animated and moved

by a common spirit, either can defeat the most praiseworthy efforts of the other," and yet the danger of such collision is not averted. We have already exposed the absurdity of continuing these opposition committees, and the annual reports of the Superintending Committees are full of remonstrances against the present arrangement, but some districts prefer not to run the risk of having the town provide large school-houses, and expensive, that is, competent teachers, and, this year, our own town, the residence of both Secretaries, and under the nose of a State Normal School, has voted to empower the prudential committees to contract with teachers whom they can not employ, &c. &c. In this same town was exhibited another beauty of the present system, which, though common, has not been described by its friends or enemies. In two of the large villages, the town having provided excellent school-houses, the districts felt in duty bound to procure suitable teachers. As their share of the town appropriation and the State school money was not enough to pay for the services of such teachers, certain liberal individuals subscribed an additional sum of three or four hundred dollars, to be paid in case the town refused to pay it at the annual meeting lately held. At this meeting, the chairman of the town committee stated the case, and recommended the payment of the additional sum. Then the new beauty of the system to which we have alluded appeared. A very worthy but uneducated man from a remote district objected to the payment, on the ground that it was unfair to tax the farming districts to improve the schools of these villages, and continue schools the year round in them. In the farming districts, the farmers wanted the aid of their children, and could not afford to send them to school in the summer months, and, because the men of the village had nothing for their children to do, it was unreasonable to tax hard-working men to keep such children at school, or, in other words, to keep them out of idleness or mischief. The poorer districts were strong enough to prevent the appropriation, even when modified so as to leave the appropriation of the money to the judgment of the town committee. While school affairs are conducted on this narrow plan, no great improvement can be expected. In his Eighth Report the former Secretary says, "The stronger districts being able to outvote the weaker, have sometimes assigned to themselves the lion's share of the school money," but we fear that the numerical strength is not in the more intelligent districts; for, though perhaps stronger than any other single district, they are not so strong as several weaker ones united, as in the case just mentioned.

The fact is, that, by the present system, there is no arrangement for the just and uniform distribution of the school money in the several districts. Where a town has many districts, it is probable that a majority of them pay but a small portion of the school tax, and the money, if distributed in proportion to the taxation, would leave little to such districts; whereas, such districts may have a large number of children, and if the distribution were based on this ground, those who paid the least would get the most, which to the tax payers would seem to be an unequal, if not unjust arrangement. The State has left the distribution with the towns, and the towns must do as the numerical majority of voters may determine. Each district, in some form or other, has a voice, and, of course, there is ground for jealousy and contention. Now the only true basis of distribution is that which gives every child in the town an equal chance to get instruction. If a district is small and poor, it should be enlarged if possible, but, at any rate, it should have as good instruction, and as comfortable a school-room, furniture and apparatus, as the best. It would be hard to give a reason why the children of a poor district should be punished with a cheap and incompetent teacher, and be imprisoned in a wretched hovel misnamed a school-house, when other children of the same town have a teacher and a school-house of an opposite character. The chief object of the system of free education is the instruction of the poor, who would otherwise grow up in ignorance, and this, not so much as a charity to the poor, as a protection to the rich; for, educated wealth and ignorant poverty are the curse from which our fathers fled, and this state of things involves one of two results, either the rich must be at the mercy of those who have the physical force unrestrained, or they must employ force against force, and free institutions fall at once, and mercenary standing armies come into fashion.

We are aware that the same argument which is used to defend town organization, is also used to defend the subdivision of towns into districts, but there is a just medium in all things. If the State government were beyond the control of towns, then multiplying them may increase their security; and, if towns are governed without reference to the citizens, then the district system may be of service; but the governed to-day may be governors to-morrow, and there is less fear of the people's being oppressed by their rulers, than of the rulers' being awed and restrained, if not oppressed by the people. But, however the argument may be, there can be no doubt of

the fact, that the system operates unequally. There is as much difference between some parts of Massachusetts and others, in regard to the advantages and opportunities for obtaining a good education, as if they were governed by entirely different laws, and under very different institutions. It is said that the present Secretary of the Board has pointed out this monstrous defect in his late Report, but as we have not been so fortunate as to see a copy of it, we can only praise him on the report of others. If the State has its dark portions, so has many a town, and the several districts bear a similar relation to each other that the towns do. No one will pretend that this is inevitable or desirable. If knowledge is power, then no portion of the body should be left weak. If knowledge is security, then we should not rest until our property, our institutions, our liberty, and our lives, are fully secured. If knowledge is order, then more knowledge and better knowledge are necessary, or our standard of order is not the most elevated. In some parts of the State, the towns pay seven or eight dollars a year for the education of each child between certain ages, while, in other parts, the towns pay less than two dollars. Here is inequality, and probably injustice also; for, if the advantages are in proportion to the expense, the less favored children surely have cause to complain; but, if the advantages are no better, and the institution belongs to the State, and the schools are required by law, then ought the expense in some way be made to fall equally upon the citizens.

A GEOGRAPHICAL LESSON. THE SOUTH POLE.

In one or two of our last year's numbers we gave an outline of the attempts to reach the *North* Pole of the earth, bringing the history down to the season when the ships sent in search of Sir John Franklin were probably looking out for winter quarters. We propose now, briefly as possible, to give a sketch of similar attempts to penetrate to the South Pole. Although no navigator has entered the Arctic Ocean by Davis's Strait and left it at Bhering's, few persons probably doubt that there is a passage, and that, north of America, Europe and Asia, and separated from them, is a large tract of land, a Continent, if you please, of which Greenland is probably a part, and on which is the spot called the North Pole. So, it is satisfactorily

shown that, south of America, Africa and New Holland, is another tract, a Southern Continent, which surrounds the point called the South Pole; and, although but little pecuniary profit can be expected from discoveries in this region, it has been visited by many navigators, at much expense and great risk. No one has approached so near the South as some have approached the North Pole, but the Southern or Antarctic Continent has actually been circumnavigated, and there can be no doubt that science and commerce will be greatly benefitted by labors, which, to the superficial observer, may seem to be worse than useless, because expensive and dangerous.

No maps that have been made for schools give any complete drawings of the portions of this Southern Continent ascertained beyond any doubt, but it will not be difficult for any teacher to mark the coast, as we shall describe it, on the outline or other maps of his school, and then it will be a useful exercise to let the pupils copy what is thus drawn and described by the teacher.

Bartholomew Diaz, a Portuguese, excelled all other navigators before his time, when, in 1486, he discovered the Cape of Good Hope, which his countryman, Vasco de Gama, doubled (sailed round) a few years afterwards. In 1501, Vespucci, in the service of Portugal, sailed down the coast of South America to the 52d degree of South Latitude. When he turned back, he is supposed to have been between the Falkland Isles and Patagonia. Magellan, with a Spanish fleet of five small vessels, the largest measuring only 120 tons, discovered the Strait that bears his name in 1520. The natives wearing very clumsy things for shoes, he called them Patagones, or *clumsy-hooved*, and seeing many fires on shore during the night, he called the land Terra del Fuego, or *Land of Fire*. While at anchor there, some of the natives visited the ships, and the Spaniards, either deceived in regard to their stature, or wishing to embellish their narratives, reported them to be giants, and the fable was believed until quite modern times. Magellan was the first who sailed entirely round the globe, and noticed the two facts, that by constantly sailing West, or away from home, he in time arrived at home, and the year which, had he staid at home, would have had 365 days, had only 364. The earth turns from West to East, and, if a person stays still, the sun will rise to his eye once in every 24 hours; but, if he sails westward, it will take the place where he is a little more than 24 hours to turn from sunrise to sunrise, and this difference will amount to a whole day in one circumnavigation of the globe.

Balboa, a Spaniard, had seen the Pacific from the Isthmus of Darien, but Magellan was the first European that entered it with ships. He crossed the Pacific, and was killed on the Philippine Islands by the natives, only one of his vessels returning home.

Sir Francis Drake, in the service of England, passed through the Strait of Magellan, and being driven by storms towards the South, landed on the island of Terra del Fuego, and found the southernmost point of it, which he supposed to be the end of the world. Here he lay down, and, stretching his body as far as he could beyond the point, he boasted that "he had been farther South than any man as yet known." De Weert, a Dutchman, in 1598, discovered the Falkland Isles; and Gerritz, who was in the same fleet, being driven as far South as 64°, discovered islands, which were afterwards re-discovered and called the South Shetlands (lat. 64°, and W. long. 60°). A subsequent Dutch expedition sailed round the Southern extremity of America, and named one island Staten Land (States Land), in honor of the United States of Holland, and the most Southern point of another island was called Cape Horn, in honor of one of their ships which had just been lost. Sailors generally speak of doubling *The Horn*, and they say the island is shaped like a horn, but the name first appears in history as we have mentioned. Le Maire, a merchant of Amsterdam, fitted out this expedition, and gave the command of it to William Schouten and his own son, in 1615. Another Dutch fleet in 1623, under Jacques le Hermite, went as far South as 60°, and rounded Cape Horn without seeing it. Torres, who sailed West from Lima, probably discovered Tahiti, Pitcairn's Island, and Australia, or New Holland. A Dutch ship sent by Van Diemen, the Governor of Batavia, under Tasman, doubled the island at the Southern point of Australia, and named it after the Governor. The Dutch Government, in honor of their country, called the great island New Holland. Tasman also discovered New Zealand, and supposed it adjoined Terra del Fuego. Cook, in 1769, visited Australia, and called a portion of it New South Wales. He sailed round New Zealand, and showed that it had no connection with Terra del Fuego. A Frenchman named Kerguelen discovered an island in 50° 5′ S. lat., and named it after himself. Cook named it Desolation Island. In Cook's second voyage, 1772, he reached 67° 15′ S. lat., and was stopped by ice. In 1774 he reached a spot 71° 10′ S. lat., and 106° 54′ W. long., and was again stopped by ice. He afterwards

discovered New Georgia, on which he said "not a tree was to be seen, nor a shrub big enough to make a toothpick." This is in 54° 55′ S. lat. He then discovered Sandwich Land, and declared that "no man would ever go South farther than he had gone." After this, the Terra Australis Incognita (unknown Southern Continent), which had been drawn on most published maps, was omitted by geographers.

In 1820, Weddell discovered the South Orkneys, and in 1821, a Russian, named Bellinghausen, penetrated as far as 69 degrees, which is within the Antarctic Circle. In 1823, Weddell and Brisbane, two Englishmen, with two very small vessels, penetrated to 74° 15′, which is 214 miles farther than Cook's farthest advance. Although the sea was free from ice, Weddell returned, because of the lateness of the season. All the places that we have mentioned have since been resorted to for seals and whales, and immense numbers are annually caught there. The Messrs. Enderby, English merchants, sent out two small vessels in 1830, under Capt. Biscoe, and they discovered an island in 58° 25′ S. lat., and long. 26° 55′. They crossed Cook's track and found the ice as Cook described it 58 years before. They afterwards saw a considerable extent of coast in lat. 65° 57′, E. long. 47° 20′. Biscoe with difficulty reached Van Diemen's land, but, after refitting, he sailed again, and in lat. 67° 1′, long. W. 71° 48′, discovered what is now called Graham's Land. The same merchants Enderby, in 1838, sent two other small vessels, under Capt. Balleney, who discovered five islands, which he named after himself, and one of which has a splendid peak 15,000 feet in height. The smaller vessel with all her crew was lost in a storm. A French Expedition, under D'Urville, followed Weddell's track in 1837, but was stopped by ice between the parallels of 63° and 64°. He discovered Louis Philippe's Land, and, in a second attempt, discovered land, which he named Adelie, after his wife.

In 1838, the United States Exploring Expedition, of five vessels, under Lieut. Wilkes, had penetrated to 70°, when the winter compelled them to return. The second cruise was made from Sydney, in New South Wales. Wilkes selected the meridian of Macquarie Island, and discovered what he supposed to be land in 66° S. lat., and, in 66° 45′, he entered a bay which he called Piner's Bay, and supposed to be the real Antarctic Continent; but D'Urville pretends that it is the same land that he had named Adelie a few days before. The American commander published a splendid account of this

Expedition, under the patronage of the United States Government, but the English and French, jealous of his claims, have endeavored to wrest his honors from him.

In 1839, two English vessels, under Sir James Ross, who had been distinguished for his explorations at the North Pole, started on an expedition to the South Pole. He spent 68 days at Kerguelen's Island, and then sailed South on the meridian of 170° East, the same on which Balleney had reached 69 degrees. He took possession of what is called Victoria Land in lat. 71° 56′, and E. long. 171° 7′. The place was called Possession Island, and, like most of the land hitherto discovered in that region, was mountainous, rocky, and evidently of volcanic origin. The birds pecked at the men instead of avoiding them, and the whales would not get out of the way of the ships. The chief object of Capt. Ross seems to have been to discover the Southern Magnetic Pole, that is, a spot where the magnetic needle, instead of lying horizontally, dips and stands perfectly upright, or vertical. He had found such a spot in the Arctic Ocean, and he hoped to find the corresponding spot here. He reached so far that the dip of the needle was 88° 10′, (90° would have made it vertical) the ships were in lat. 76° 8′, and E. long. 168° 12′, higher than any navigator had reached, and South of the Magnetic Pole, which was only 200 miles distant. Here Capt. Ross took formal possession of an Island, which he called Franklin, after his friend Sir John, whom he was destined afterwards to make an unsuccessful search for at the North. Near this was a volcanic mountain 12,400 feet high, which he named Mount Erebus. At one time he penetrated to 78° 4′ of S. lat., and coasted 450 miles along a bank of ice about 200 feet above the sea, and probably 1000 feet thick. He traced the unknown Continent from the 70th to the 79th degree of S. lat., but gave up the enterprise in S. lat. 76° 12′, E. long. 164°, where the dip of the needle was 88° 40′, only 160 miles from the Magnetic Pole. He sailed again from Hobart's Town in 1841, and reached 78° 9′ S. lat., W. long. 161° 27′. Thus the matter stands at present, so far as *public* accounts may be relied on, yet there is no doubt that many of our enterprising whalers, if they pleased, could tell tales of the Southern Antarctic region, that would greatly extend our knowledge, but their interest lies in keeping their own secrets, and concealing the places whither they are accustomed to resort for oil and seal-skins. There is, no doubt, a Southern Continent, but it is covered with ice the year round, and, of course, has no appearance of vegetation or of inhabitants.

THE PLEDGE. A DIALOGUE FOR SCHOOLS.

George. I can not see, James, why you are unwilling to take the pledge, if, as I know, you never drink any spirit, and have resolved never to do so.

James. I see no need of a promise, if my mind is made up. I am as safe without the pledge as with it.

Geo. I can not think so. In other human affairs, we do not act as you propose to do. All bonds, notes and contracts, are pledges, and yet they are valuable, if it be only to help the memory.

Ja. I want no such helps, my memory is strong enough without a formal pledge.

Geo. Your memory of what? If I understand your position, you have nothing to remember. You do not intend to transgress, you say; pray, why not *promise* never to do so, and then have your strong memory to help your good resolution?

Ja. My resolution is enough, and the same as a promise.

Geo. Not exactly. A resolution is a contract that a man makes with *himself*, and it may be easily broken; but a promise implies two parties, and is not so apt to be disregarded.

Ja. I should be afraid, if I took the pledge, that I might, some time or other, break it, and be put to open shame.

Geo. How is that? Just repeat that sentence, for it seems to contain a strong argument for the pledge, if you are sincere in the resolutions which you say you prefer. You surely do not wish to secure an easy retreat, in case you are tempted to excess.

Ja. No, but I do not wish to disgrace myself by enabling any one to hold up a broken promise before my eyes.

Geo. If you consider a resolution as good as a promise, I do not see that it matters much which is held up in fragments to mortify you. When Cortez invaded Mexico, he found that his soldiers could not be depended upon, because their vessels lay at the landing place, and they knew that, in any difficulty, they could fall back upon them.

Ja. Well, what of that?

Geo. He burnt them all, and his troops being obliged to go forward, obtained a complete victory over the enemy.

Ja. Then you would have me burn my resolutions?

Geo. No, not exactly, but I would place them under the guard of a solemn pledge, and so "make assurance doubly sure."

Ja. Well, George, give me your hand, for I surrender, and am half inclined to think that my objection to the pledge arose from a want of sincerity in my resolutions. I will sign the pledge, burn my boats, and face the enemy, without allowing defeat or retreat to be possible.

Geo. Heaven help you to keep your resolution.

Ja. My *promise*, you mean.

Geo. No, I mean your *resolution* to take the pledge.

Ja. So be it; and let all the people say, Amen.

THE TIME FOR GOOD AND EVIL.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

If fortune with a smiling face
  Strows roses in our way,
When shall we stoop to pick them up?
  To-day, my love, to-day.
But should she frown with face of care,
  And talk of coming sorrow,
When shall we grieve, if grieve we must?
  To-morrow, love, to-morrow.

If those who've wronged us own their faults,
  And gently pity pray,
When shall we listen and forgive?
  To-day, my love, to-day.
But if stern justice urge rebuke,
  And warmth from memory borrow,
When shall we chide, if chide we dare?
  To-morrow, love, to-morrow.

If those to whom we owe a debt,
  Are harmed unless we pay,
When shall we struggle to be just?
  To-day, my love, to-day.
But if our debtor fail our hope,
  And plead his ruin thorough,
When shall we weigh his breach of faith?
  To-morrow, love, to-morrow.

If love, estranged, should once again
  Her genial smiles display,
When shall we kiss her proffered lips?
  To-day, my love, to-day.
But, if she would indulge regret,
  Or dwell with by-gone sorrow,
When shall we weep, if weep we must?
  To-morrow, love, to-morrow.

For virtuous acts and harmless joys,
The minutes will not stay;
We've always time to welcome them
To-day, my love, to-day.
But care, resentment, angry words,
And unavailing sorrow,
Come far too soon if they appear
To-morrow, love, to-morrow.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

A few weeks ago, we received a letter from a teacher, inquiring whether the expression,

"Man is naught, is less than naught,"

was a correct one, and we good naturedly inserted the letter in the Journal, with a remark that committed ourselves in the negative. Our rashness called forth the following from an esteemed subscriber, and we insert that also with pleasure.

"Mr. Editor,—In a late Journal, a correspondent criticises the first of the following lines in the 53d of the Christian Hymns, compiled by a committee of the Cheshire Pastoral Association:

'Man is *naught*, is less than *naught*,
Thou, our God, art all in all.'

You say, 'This critical question is based upon a typographical error, which, we trust, has not run through the fifteen editions without being discovered.' Will you please to inform the readers of the Journal what is the typographical error in the above line? In Greenwood's collection of Psalms and Hymns, the types leave the line thus:

'Man is nought, is less than nought,'

and we suspect it was the correct orthographic pen of the Rev. Dr. Leonard that directed the types aright through the fifteen editions of the collection of Hymns of which he is the chief compiler."

C. F. S.

It is hardly necessary for us to say what the error is, for our correspondent has marked it very distinctly. If our friend wished to ask by what authority we rejected the spelling of the *noun*, as it is spelled in the hymn, we reply, that we consider the proposal to spell the noun and the adjective alike to be a useless, and, as we trust, hopeless attempt to oppose long con-

tinued, general and highly respectable usage; an innovation that is not justified by etymology, and would do no good if justified and successful.

Until Noah Webster undertook partially to reform English orthography, our printers and authors uniformly distinguished the noun from the adjective by spelling them differently. We learned to make this distinction from Webster's own Spelling Book, and we have taught the same in the Spelling Books of Bingham, Perry, Alden, Cummings, Emerson, Russell, Town, and many others. Webster did not discover his "mare's nest" until he had fixed the usage, and because our Legislature is disposed to suck the eggs he has found, and to compel our district schools to do the same, it does not follow that this will be, or ought to be the fashion.

We find the distinction carefully observed in all standard editions of the Bible. The Oxford, Cambridge, and London editions are uniform in this usage, whether the editions are printed by royal authority, by private enterprise, or by the Bible Society. The best editions of all our old standard authors, too, observe the same rule, and the best presses in New England do the same, as far as we know, in spite of the Dictionaries. In 1828, Webster published his great book, and, in his modest way, declared that the noun *nought* should be spelled *naught*, saying it was composed of *ne* and *aught* or *wiht*. He refers the inquirer to *aught*, and gives *awiht*, *aht*, *owiht*, *ohwit*, *oht*, Saxon, as its etymology. He does not say why, when the *o* has prevailed, as it had a right to do, we should go back to *a*.

Worcester, as usual, is more cautious and more modest. He seems evidently aware that the best usage has fixed the *o* beyond change, but says he prefers *naught*, because it is a compound of *aught*, and yet he gives *ought*, *any thing*, as well as *aught*, Milton being his authority for *ought*, and Shakspeare for *aught*. But here a difficulty arises, for *not* is probably a contraction of *nought*, and if we change the latter, consistency requires us to change the contraction also, and then we shall have *nat* for *not*.

Bailey, who compiled his valuable dictionary more than a century ago, gives *nought* [*nowit* or *nowhit*, Saxon] *nothing*, and makes no comment. He gives *naught*, *naht*, Sax. *bad*, *nought*, *not*, and makes no remark. He has also, *Ought*, Sax. *oiht*, *somewhat*, and *Aught*, any thing, without its etymon. Todd's Johnson, which was united with Walker, and at one time the standard in New England, has *ought* and *aught*, without any remark. *Nought* also is given without remark,

but, under *naught*, we are told it is commonly, though improperly written *nought*.

Now we see in all this no obligation to change the usage, and we still think our first correspondent made a fair hit when he asked whether a man's being "less than naught," did not imply that he had some positive goodness. We have a proper respect for Dr. Leonard, but we do not think him better authority than Dr. Greenwood, from whom he chose to differ; and, as to etymological skill and research, we hope that, after a life devoted to it, we shall be forgiven if we feel that we have attained to somewhat of the former, and have made respectable progress in the latter.

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE BRAIN.

[Extracted from the Key to Fowle's Physiological Diagrams, lately published.]

[CONTINUED FROM OUR LAST NUMBER, PAGE 128.]

It has been stated that, when a muscle is used, there is a rush of blood towards it to give it power, and to restore the waste occasioned by the effort. This is as true of the brain as of any muscle, and long continued action causes fatigue of one as much as of the other. The brain of a child, like his arm, is unable to do the work of a man, and, in educating children, regard should be had, not only to the amount of labor, but to the kind of task; for, it is as clear that some faculties are employed earlier than others, as that some are stronger than others, and that all, at first, are weak.

The infant has animal *propensities* resembling the instincts of the lower animals, and these are first developed, and should be first educated. The propensity to eat and drink may be regulated from the first, not only in regard to times, and seasons, and quantity, but also in regard to the kind and quality of food. Fear and caution may be trained to avoid timidity and bashfulness on the one hand, and heedlessness and useless exposure of life on the other. The propensity to destroy, not only living, but inanimate objects, must be restrained and directed, often before the child can speak; and the propensity to contend, to fight, must be educated early, unless the parent thinks the tiger

or the cur a model in this respect. That powerful instinct, which is said to have become characteristic of our nation, acquisitiveness, which is so closely allied to selfishness, and which so often degenerates into avarice, may be early taught to respect the property of others, and to acquire only to increase the means of doing good.

These hints will show that parents may begin the most important part of education long before the child is placed at school, and lest any parent should ask "who is sufficient for this thing," it may be added that to train a child thus early does not require long or deep study of treatises on education, for all treatises are contained in one word, EXAMPLE.

Next to the instincts, perhaps, come the *senses*. These may be educated so as to become almost unerring guides, but children are generally allowed to use them as if they could not be abused. If the eye were early trained to judge of forms, of size and distance; of number, color, order, and all that constitutes natural beauty; if it were strengthened with care and protected with discretion, who could say what would be the limits of its reach, what the increase of its pleasures?

So with the ear; what parent ever thinks of training this important sense early to distinguish between sounds, and to create a refined and exact ear, which would not only regulate that natural and universal language which men call music, but that arbitrary language, also, which men read and speak?

So with the sense of touch; what parent gives lessons to his children in this matter, and yet who does not know the immense difference between the untaught fingers of even a delicate hand, and the educated fingers of the blind?

So even the taste and smell may be early trained to prefer what is simple and wholesome, and to aid in the establishment of habits essential to health and morals, before reason and judgment are matured. Nature would never have supplied the senses with such an endless variety of lessons, if we were never to learn them.

Next to the senses come the *sentiments*. The blossoms of pride, of love of applause, of benevolence, of reverence and of conscientiousness begin to expand before the intellect has made any considerable progress; and all of these may be, and must be educated, or the future mind, the future character, must be imperfect. It is to be regretted that humility and modesty, kindness and love, respect for others and reverence for our Maker, thoughtfulness and a deep sense of justice and duty, are less regarded in the education of children, than the knowledge of the nine digits, or the A, B, C.

Lastly, the *intellectual powers* begin to strengthen, and who does not see that, if the propensities, the senses, and the sentiments have been properly trained, the intellect stands on vantage ground, and instead of being obliged to lift all these powers to its level, or spend all its strength in rectifying their abuses, it is enabled by their assistance to ascend heights otherwise unattainable.

But the reverse of all this is the popular method of instruction. The intellect alone is cared for, in the nursery and in the school-room; and as the intellectual organ is unable to work, the child is taught to repeat words, and the delighted parents are deluded into the belief, that words are ideas, when they are to ideas only what leaves are to fruit.

The brain, perhaps, more than any other organ, is liable to injury from excessive action. No organ has so many veins and arteries; and over-action, besides wearying the brain, as it would the arm, causes a rush of blood to the brain, an evil common to hard students, and the precursor of inflammation, dropsy, insanity and paralysis. This abuse, arising from incessant mental labor, must not be confounded with that congestion of the brain, which arises from excessive indulgence of the appetite; for, in the latter case, there is an excess of blood, which low diet, abstinence, or the leech may remedy; but, in the other case, there is no excess of blood in the body, but an unequal distribution of it; what should have gone elsewhere has rushed to the brain, and common sense indicates that all the sufferer needs to do is to exercise the limbs that have been neglected, especially the feet, and so divert from the head what is there for no good purpose, and restore the equilibrium that has been destroyed.

Errata. On the first page of last number, for the word *repudiating* read *admitting*. The word repudiating does the Secretary great injustice, and would have been corrected, had we been at home to read the proof. The word *he*, seven lines below, should be omitted.

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